

Secretariat

Regional Banking Taskforce
Financial System Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

Parliamentary Taskforce – Closure of Regional Bank Branches by the Big 4 Banks.

My wife and I, as concerned elderly citizens, ask that you recognize that the Big 4 banks have not honored their previous promises to Parliamentary Committee's that they maintain branch numbers in rural communities at agreed levels.

They assume that everyone can and should use 'on line' banking facilities to pay their accounts and access funds for everyday living needs, by the use of cards instead of cash. They are forcing elderly and disadvantaged groups to use the internet banking system and to press that point even further they are also closing ATM's in the bush (20% in the last 5 years) not to mention suburban metropolitan areas as well. Of course, this is to ensure that they achieve their objective of forcing everyone to dispense with the use of 'cash' and strengthening their banking position at a reduced cost to them.

According to Journalist, Dale Webster, the number of bank closures in Regional Australia is almost 25% over the past 4 years this is despite previous 'hand on heart' assurances from the CBA, as an example, to a Parliamentary Committee in 2004 that they would not close branches beyond an agreed number. They have broken that promise and they will continue to do so as will the other Big 4 Banks because nothing matters to them but profit.

A viable alternative is available and already in place to provide banking services to individuals and small businesses in rural communities that the banks are abandoning. Information relating to that and the benefits it will provide are set out herein:

Member for Kennedy, Bob Katter MP, have drafted a bill for a Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank (CPSB), which Mr Katter intends to introduce in Parliament in the near future. The bill would establish the CPSB as a government corporation to operate exclusively through post offices. The CPSB would:

- *Guarantee banking services to all Australians;*
- *Guarantee income to Australia Post and LPOs, ensuring the long-term viability of postal services across Australia (so they never have to beg from the private banks again);*
- *Guarantee all deposits of CPSB customers;*
- *Support the cash payments system, so that cash is always available in the economy (whereas the private banks are aggressively trying to phase out cash to trap people in electronic transactions that have to go through banks);*

- *Lend to individuals, business and industries in the local communities the CPSB serves (which are increasingly starved of credit by the private banks); and*
- *Invest surplus deposits in a national development bank to invest in major infrastructure and industry development in regional Australia.*

People are going to judge their Political Representatives very closely from now to the next Federal Election. There are divisions appearing on a number of fronts and this, for me and many others I know, will be one of them.

Please Do Not accept the word of the Big 4 Bank Representatives when they appear before you with their lame assurances, they have done that on this issue at least twice before and not kept their promises. We know there are a lot of people who intend following the passage of Mr Katter's Bill. We certainly hope this Inquiry lays the groundwork, through strong supporting recommendations, to allow Bob Katter's Bill to pass through both houses successfully.

Thanking you

Mr and Mrs T Jordan